



UNITED BROTHERHOOD
of CARPENTERS & JOINERS
of AMERICA

Douglas J. McCarron
General President



INTERNATIONAL UNION
of OPERATING ENGINEERS

James T. Callahan
General President

September 16, 2013

The Honorable Bill Shuster
2209 Russell House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall
2307 Russell House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Gibbs
329 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Timothy H. Bishop
306 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member Rahall, Representatives Gibbs and Bishop:

The National Construction Alliance II, a partnership between the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America and the International Union of Operating Engineers, wholeheartedly endorses H.R. 3080, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2013.

You have demonstrated through your leadership that once again the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee can, even in a highly contentious, partisan atmosphere, drive bipartisan agreement on key transportation-authorizing legislation that moves the country forward, improving the competitiveness of the United States in the global economy.

The WRRDA legislation, H.R. 3080, addresses needed reforms within the Corps of Engineers, treating program administration and investments in a more transparent and fiscally responsible manner. Specifically, the National Construction Alliance II supports the language in the bill that is designed to increase expenditures in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, eventually leading to investment of up to 80% of the revenues into the fund by 2020 – a major improvement over the status quo.

Federal resources invested in our water-resources infrastructure will create thousands of good paying construction jobs which will benefit not only the members of our two organizations but will address serious unemployment problems throughout the construction industry. Nearly 1.7 million construction workers have left the industry since the start of the Great Recession. We need to provide opportunities for them to return to the jobs for which they were trained through investing in American infrastructure.

Since the passage of the last water-resources legislation in 2007, the United States' waterborne transportation needs – the investments in ports and harbors, river channels, locks and dams and other water transportation infrastructure – have only increased. The American Society of Civil Engineers gives the nation's inland waterways the grade of D-, the nation's dams a D, and America's ports a mediocre C. The country must do better in order to compete in the world.

The Operating Engineers and the Carpenters – two of the largest construction unions – look forward to working with the Committee's bipartisan leadership by strongly supporting H.R. 3080 during the committee process and on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Thank you again for your bipartisan leadership on this vital legislation.

Sincerely,

Raymond J. Poupore
Executive Vice President